

Compliance Corner Social Media and Government Ethics

There are a variety of federal laws and regulations that govern the use of social media by federal employees in both official and personal capacities. So, what

do you need to know? Here are answers to the most frequently asked questions...

Can I use social media while on duty? When employees are on duty, the Standards of Conduct require that they use official time in an honest effort to perform official duties, and that they use government property only to perform official duties. This limits the extent to which employees may use their social media accounts while on duty. You can however, logon to your social media accounts during breaks.

Can I use government owned computers to access social media? Yes, VHA Directive 6001 allows for 'limited personal use' of government owned property as long as doing so does not result in loss of employee productivity. Keep in mind that employees have no right to privacy while using work devices.

Can I refer to my title or position on social media? Yes, with a caveat, employees may not use title or position for public gain or to suggest government sanction or support. Merely listing your title does not violate this. While you are free to describe your own interests, and ideas on unofficial time, do not use your personal social media accounts to act as a representative of the VA without authorization. When people know you work for the VA, they may assume you speak for the VA. To ensure readers understand that your posts are your personal views consider putting a disclaimer that states you are not posting in an official capacity.

What types of posts should I avoid? The Standards of Ethical Conduct prohibit employees from disclosing nonpublic information to further their private interests. Never post or share work related information to external groups, bulletin boards, or other public forums without approval from the Office of Public Affairs. Discussing and sharing work related information, patient information, or information about other staff members on social media is never appropriate.

Can I engage in fundraising through social media? Yes, employees may use social media to fundraise if they do not use their VA title or suggest that the VA sanctions the fundraising activity. Also, employees should not solicit funds from a subordinate.

What about posting to support a political candidate? The Hatch Act prohibits federal employees from sending messages through social media that advocate for a political party or candidate for partisan public office while on duty or in a federal building; engaging in such activity may subject them to disciplinary action. Employees maintaining a regular work schedule while teleworking are considered to have the same on duty status as if they were at their regular duty stations (Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326).

What else should I know? Be diligent when using social media. Foreign intelligence agents are known to specifically target federal employees for a variety of reasons.

This information is intended clarify some issues that federal employees might not be aware of or are confusing. This is not meant to replace a thorough review of the law, policy, or official guidance. For more information contact me at Deborah.reinhart@va.gov or 208-422-1267.

COMPLIANCE **CORNER** Boise VA Medical Center

BOISE is HIGHLY RELIABLE

PRINCIPLES & VALUES

THEME OF THE MONTH

Commitment to Resilience

April 2022 | National Safety Poster

Bouncing Back from a Mistake



CONTEXT

While adjusting a patient's dosage for a high-risk blood thinning medication, Pharmacist Lindsey Ladell at the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center completed the assessment note and ordered follow-up labs but forgot to update the medication order. The mistake led to the patient receiving a higher than intended dose and a bleeding complication.



ACTION

Although the patient recovered with no long-term impacts, Dr. Ladell was devastated by her mistake. She shared her story with her coworkers and was surprised to hear that several others had also made the same mistake. Determined to help prevent the mistake from happening again, she created a checklist to verify that all required medication dosage change steps are completed.



RESULTS

Dr. Ladell's Commitment to Resilience and ability to bounce back from a mistake contributed to improving a process. In sharing her story, she recognized how incredibly important Safety Stories are in helping to normalize discussing mistakes.



I recognize how incredibly important stories are in helping to normalize discussing our own personal mistakes so that we can help others.

Lindsey Ladell, PharmD, BCPS
High Reliability Organization Program Manager
Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center
Milwaukee, Wisconsin







We achieved The Gold Seal of Approval® from The Joint Commission

What does this mean?



The Joint Commission's Mission

To continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value.





The Joint Commission enterprise is a global driver of quality improvement and patient safety in health care. Through leading practices, unmatched knowledge and expertise, and rigorous standards, we help organizations across the continuum of care lead the way to zero harm. Like you, we believe in providing the best possible care – every time – to each and every patient.



What is The Gold Seal of Approval® from The Joint Commission?

Our facility voluntarily underwent a thorough evaluation by The Joint Commission. The goal of the evaluation? To see if our facility meets the Joint Commission's rigorous performance standards in delivering quality, safe care. By meeting these standards, our facility received The Gold Seal of Approval® – an internationally recognized symbol of quality.

The Joint Commission accredits and certifies more than 22,000 health care programs worldwide and focuses on continually improving health care by setting the highest standards for health care quality throughout the world. In setting the standards, The Joint Commission consults doctors, nurses, and quality and safety experts to review the current standards and make recommendations for improvements.

Accreditation and Certification

Achieving accreditation and/or certification means that our staff has made an extra effort to review and improve the key areas that can affect the quality and safety of your care.

Accreditation and certification by The Joint Commission are considered the gold standard in health care. Specially trained health care professionals who are experts in their fields visited this facility to conduct a review that monitors how well our staff:

- provide a safe environment for your care
- educate you about the risks and options for your diagnosis and treatment
- protect your rights as a patient, including your privacy rights
- evaluate your condition, before, during and after diagnosis and treatment
- protect you against infection
- plan for emergency situations



Coding Connection

To Code or Not to Code: Diagnosis Tips/FYIs

OUTPATIENT:

1. Do NOT code if -

You refer to the Veterans condition as <u>"rule out"</u>, "suspected", "probable", or "questionable".

If you do not have a definitive diagnosis at the time of service, the active signs, and symptoms ICD-10s should be used.

- 2. Chronic Conditions —
 May be coded and reported as many times as the Veteran receives treatment and care for the condition. (Do not pull in the ICD-10 if the condition wasn't truly addressed/treated at the TOS)
- 3. Highest Level of Specificity When it comes to both documentation and choosing your diagnosis codes, providing the most applicable detail is best practice for Veteran care, medical record accuracy, and VERA funding for that Veteran.

Your documentation must support the diagnosis codes you are pulling into the Veterans chart.

INPATIENT:

Heart Failure: Always document if it is <u>acute, chronic,</u> <u>or acute on chronic</u> (exacerbation). Document if it is systolic, diastolic, or systolic and diastolic if known.

Respiratory Failure: Acute Resp Failure should document evidence of increased work of breathing. Continuous home oxygen use is a good indicator the patient meets criteria for Chronic Respiratory Failure. Please specify the Liter amount.

Renal Disease: Document the stage of CKD per KQODI guidelines. See below:

Stage	GFR	Code
1	≥ 90	N18.1
2	60-89	N18.2
3a	45-59	N18.31
3b	30-44	N18.32
4	15-29	N18.4
5	< 15	N18.5
ESRD		N18.6

Delirium: Consider encephalopathy when the patient's mental status has improved back to baseline. If no toxic or metabolic factors are evident, or if the patient's mental status does not improve during hospitalization, encephalopathy is unlikely.

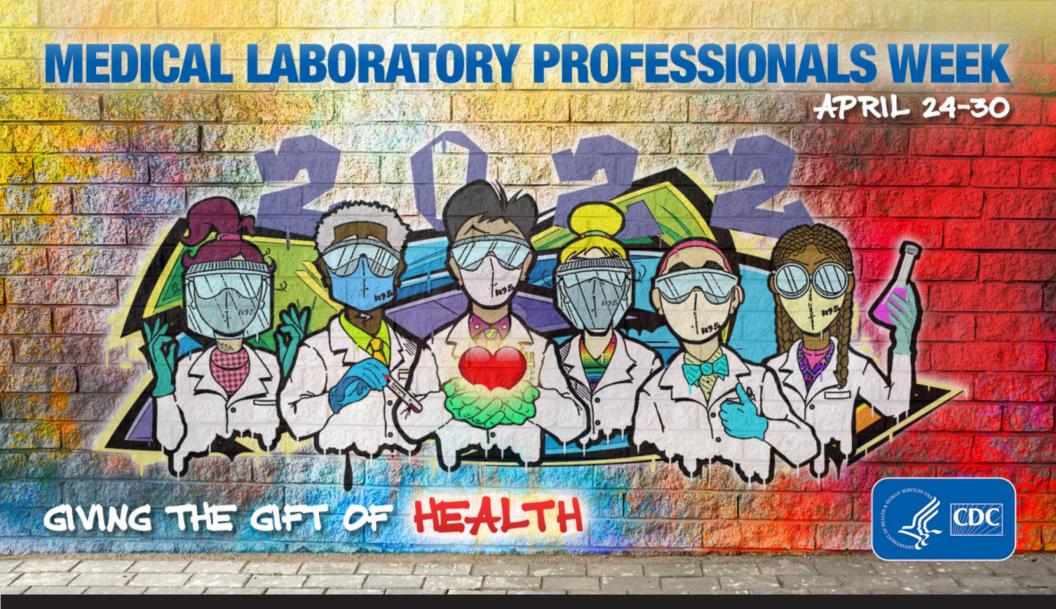
Pressure Ulcers: identify type, location, and stage. Nursing should not be the only ones documenting these.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these coding topics!

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Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, April 24-30, 2022, is an annual celebration of medical laboratory professionals and pathologists who play a vital role in health care and patient advocacy!



Privacy Awareness Week NSW 2022

PRIVACY: THE FOUNDATION OF TRUST
WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

2 - 8 May 2022

Learn more www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/PAW2022



Information Security and Privacy Awareness (ISPAW), in its 17th year, takes place April 25-29, 2022, across the Department of Veterans Affairs. This campaign is designed to raise awareness about information security and privacy responsibilities for all VA employees. This year's theme, "Always on Guard" highlights the importance of remaining vigilant in protecting and managing personal and VA sensitive information. It is the shared responsibility of all VA employees and contractors to protect and secure the personal information of the 26 million Veterans we serve.





I am not a veteran...yet. I have been in the US Air Force for four years and have at least seven more to go! Excited for the future!

I grew up in Sonoma County, CA and came to Boise for medical school and to fulfill my dream of becoming a physician. I'm headed to Wright Patterson AFB shortly to complete my training in

internal medicine and flight medicine so I may start my career as a flight surgeon. In my free time I like to cook and read non-fiction.

I feel as if my generation is a little out of touch with our veterans—mostly because we haven't seen the same level of conflict experienced by previous generations. Since I will be starting my

medical and military career as a flight surgeon, I thought that one of the most valuable learning experiences I could have would be working directly with people who have served before me. I have volunteered with the Boise VA a little over three years and though my time volunteering here is coming to an end, I'm so happy that

my next journey includes being a resident physician at another VA hospital so I may continue to serve our veterans. The Boise VA volunteers are so special and I will miss friendships and mentorship that I've found in volunteers here.



During the 3rd full week of April (April 18 to 22, 2022), the VA celebrates Psychology Recognition Week to acknowledge the contributions of Psychologists to the care of Veterans at VA Medical Centers. As a reminder, this is the fourth year VA will be celebrating Psychology Recognition Week. The history of Psychology is inextricably intertwined with that of VA, as the creation and growth of VA led to a dramatic increase in the need for Psychologists to provide care for World War II Veterans. Psychology was established as a discipline at VA in 1946 and has been providing excellent care for Veterans for over 75 years.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs







April is Occupational Therapy Month! You may ask "What is Occupational Therapy?" Occupational Therapy is an independent and patient-centered healthcare profession that focuses on promoting health and wellbeing through engagement in occupation. The primary role of OT is to promote independence through the therapeutic use of meaningful activities, or occupations, that include self-care skills, work, or leisure.

Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants work in a variety of settings that include inpatient acute care, rehabilitation and skilled nursing facilities, home health care, outpatient settings, schools, and psychiatric facilities. OT practitioners use a holistic and functional approach to address the patient's personal interests and needs.

Occupational Therapy practitioners at the Boise VA serve veterans in acute care, CLC rehabilitation and skilled nursing, outpatient clinics, 2P, Home Based Primary Care, rural health, and Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) program. They help veterans with a broad range of diagnoses to improve quality of life and independence. The diagnoses include neurological, orthopedic, medical, surgical, cognitive, and mental health conditions. The Boise VA OT practitioners also provide specialty services including wheelchair seating and positioning, hand therapy, meditation and mindfulness, and cognitive rehabilitation.

Occupational Therapy Month provides an opportunity to educate staff on the role and value of occupational therapy as part of a multidisciplinary approach to healthcare. We are proud to promote the health and wellbeing of veterans at the Boise VA!





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A few months ago, nursing worked with Biomed and a contractor to help set up the CLC wandergard/ Roam alert to be more effective when patients are wondering in the CLC's 3 floors.

One of our outstanding housekeepers, Brianna Freeman, was on high alert one day and noticed a resident roam out the door following a leaving visitor. Her situational awareness regarding this patient's frequent wandering told her to follow her gut and notify the nursing staff right away. She even was able to gain the patient's attention to distracted him from going too far outside until the nursing staff could bring him back inside.

Thank you Brianna! Thanks to your quick thinking, situational awareness and ability to speak up you were able to ensure the patient's safety. Since this incident Biomed identified an opportunity to add an additional sensor to alert staff if a patient has followed a visitor outside of the facility doors, but prevent false alarms if a patient walks by the door and not through the door.







What is VHA Shark Tank Competition?

Do you have an innovation that promotes positive outcomes and improved experiences for Veterans and employees? VHA Shark Tank Competition spotlights passionate employees addressing challenges across VHA and provides a platform for exposure from all levels of leadership. We welcome VHA employees to apply to the 2022 Shark Tank Competition starting April 11, 2022.

2022 VHA Shark Tank Highlighted Priorities

- Age-Friendly Health Systems
- De-Implementation
- Employee Experience and Well-being
- Enabling Rural Veterans to Thrive
- Health Care After COVID-19 Post-Pandemic Care
- Health Care Technologies and Tools
- Health Equity
- High Reliability Culture Change Commit to Zero Harm
- I-DEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access)
- Immersive Technologies and Experiences
- Opioids and other Substance Abuse
- Suicide Prevention
- · VA and Community Health Care Access
- Veteran Experience
- Whole Health
- Women's Health
- Other (Self-identified Priority Category)



2022 Timeline



May 6
Application
Closes



August Finalists Announced



August-September
Finalist and Shark

Preparation Period

Late October VHA Shark Tank Competition



Late October
Winners
Announced

Diffusion of Excellence
Base Camp



For more Competition information, visit Diffusion Marketplace here!



A 2K Walk & Roll to Support Homeless Veterans and Promote Health and Well-Being

MAY 18TH 2022

FUN FOR EVERYONE!

TWO KILOMETERS SIX-THOUSAND FIVE-HUNDRED & SIXTY-ONE FEET

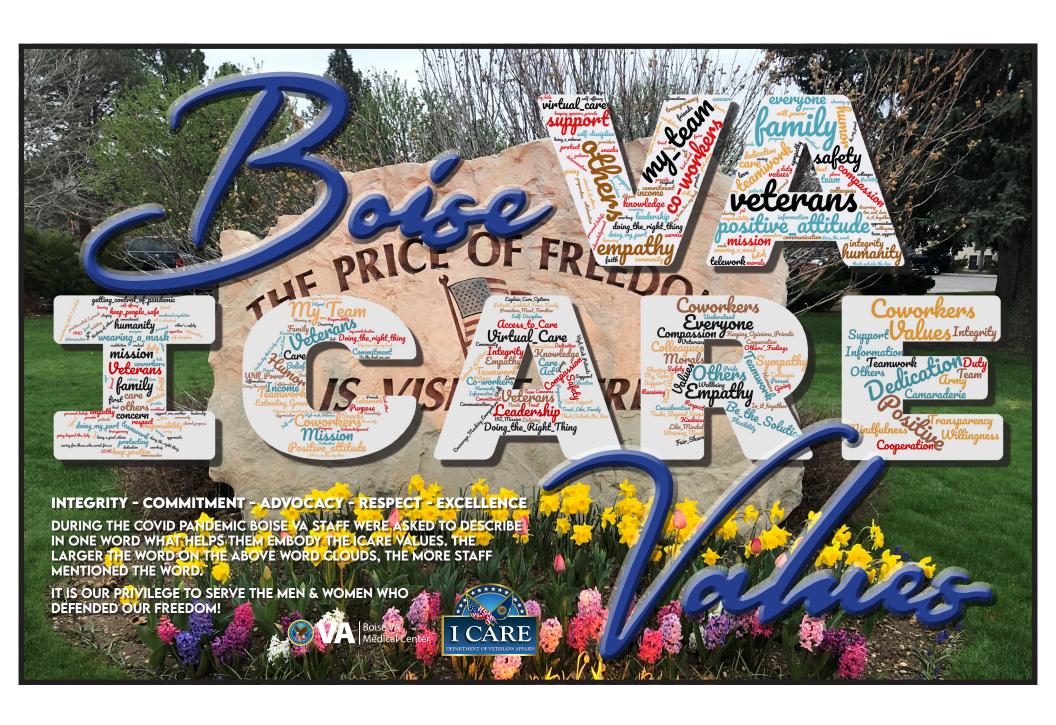
BOISE VAMC - 11AM to 2PM
CALDWELL CBOC - 12PM to 1PM

Please bring donations of toilet paper and come walk or roll with us to show support for our homeless Veterans.

All donations are voluntary!

Meet at the gazebo on the parade grounds.

Live While Health.







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SAVE THE DATE 4 MAY AT 9:00AM

Boise VA Medical Center Mental Health Summit

To join dial: (404) 397-1596

Meeting Access Code: 2761 235 6371



For additional questions contact Susie Klepacki at (208) 422-1000 x7047



imarriedthewar.com

IDAHO PREMIERE

A Documentary Film by Betty and Ken Rodgers



Presented by Recovery Idaho, Inc.

Married The War

Wives of Combat Veterans Tell Their Story

Wednesday: May 4, 2022

Opening Special Reception at 6:00pm

Tickets: \$1-\$12 donation (suggested) SEATING

Riverside Hotel

2900 W Chinden Blvd, Garden Cit

Purchase Tickets through Eventbrite: https://www.tinyurl.com/3rkd2k69

Please help us thank our sponsors





